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in: Witcher190, Canon Expansions, Magic, Witcher life

Quen

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This article is an expansion based on a canon element. For canon information on this topic, follow the link to The Witcher Wiki: **Quen**.

Quen

Quen
Sign
Symbol

Details

Element(s)

Earth

Type

Signs
Protection spell

User(s)

Witchers
More rarely, mages

Effects

Forms a magical field that can be used with different purposes depending on the context

The **Quen** Sign is one of the five primary witcher Signs. It was created by the mage Cosimo Malaspina as part of the basic repertoire during his time in the Order of Witchers. Quen is known for its many capabilities, most of them defensive, which would later be complemented by other, more specialized Signs, such as Petrax (which evenly distributes the impact received across the witcher's body) or Heliotrope (effective against exceptionally powerful blows). These abilities often manifest depending on the color in which Quen is conjured at a given moment.

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History

The Sign, as already mentioned, was created by the mage Cosimo Malaspina during the 960s, as part of the basic repertoire of Signs for the witchers of the Order. While his disciple, the legendary Alzur, undertook the more arduous task —the development of the mutations— Cosimo devoted his efforts to the rest: the creation of the first Signs and the earliest elixirs, the latter in collaboration with the alchemists who were also part of the organization.

The more sophisticated defensive applications of Quen would later be discovered by the witchers themselves during the so-called Golden Age. Some of these developments, however, only came after the Order's dissolution, when the various schools were founded and refined the use of the Sign according to their own traditions.

Uses and Effects

Quen is a Sign dedicated mostly to blocking various types of physical impacts, ranging from light to medium intensity. It draws its power from earth magic, which explains its strongly defensive nature.

Its manifestation can take several forms: an aura of energy that envelops the witcher and dissipates after absorbing one or several blows, creating a half-bubble or full bubble at the final strike that breaks it; a complete half-bubble or sphere surrounding the caster (without the need for the energy aura); a momentary shield that halts an attack provided it is not excessively powerful (otherwise, Heliotrope must be employed, executed by crossing both arms in an X-shape just before the impact); or through chromatic variations of the Sign itself, each with its own specific properties.

The standard color is amber, the most common manifestation of Quen. However, its hue changes depending on the usage or the intensity of the force exerted against it:

- **Light blue**: when used to cushion the damage from a fall from great height.
- **Green**: when resisting multiple minor blows in rapid succession, such as during a horde attack.
- **Red**: when temporarily supporting the weight of a collapse, functioning as structural reinforcement. The intensity of the red usually indicates how much weight it can bear and for how long. The brighter the color, the less support and shorter the duration.
- **Pink**: when conjured as an air bubble for diving, no longer defensive but protective in terms of containment.
- **Golden**: when the bubble is employed for deep-sea descent, evenly distributing the immense underwater pressure.

This versatility makes Quen one of the most useful and adaptable Signs in the entire witcher repertoire.

Derivated Signs

- Vorg
- Petrax
- Heliotrope

Trivia

- The different colors of Quen and their respective uses were inspired by a personal headcanon of the author, in which the color of portals in The Witcher indicates the distance they cover.
- They were also inspired by the fact that, during the development of The Witcher 3, Quen was intended to undergo a retcon, changing its color from amber to light blue (as seen in a 2014 build of the game).
- Finally, the version of Quen that manifests as a partial shield rather than a full bubble was inspired by the—questionable in many respects—Netflix adaptation of The Witcher, specifically Episode 1 of Season 2.